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Especially for Homemakers

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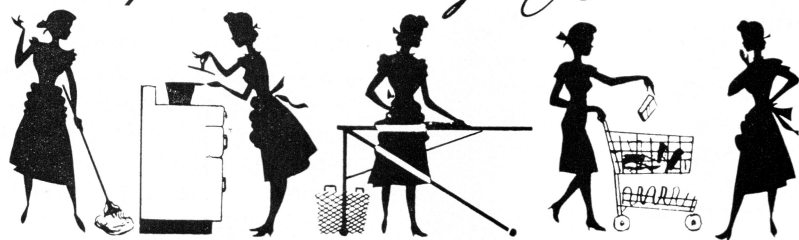
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Especially for...



HOMEMAKERS

by Candace Hurley
Homemaking Editor

Live With Light!

LIGHT AND COLOR both have influenced periods of decoration. The very first light source, the fireplace, emphasized the warm tones of the decor — bringing out the best in the old cherry and mahogany furniture of the settlers. Then came the periods of kerosene lamps and the first incandescent lightbulbs. Still, the light source emphasized the warm oranges and reds. With the development of the fluorescent tube, emphasis at first was placed on the beauty of blues and greens.

Today, however, fluorescent lighting can bring out *either* the warm or cool colors to add to the beauty of your environment, depending on the type of tube you choose.

Light is color. Without light, there'd be no color. That's how Mary Pickett, assistant professor of household equipment, describes the interplay of light and color in your home decorating scheme.

Beautiful drapery fabrics, upholstery, pictures and carpet colors can become brilliant and alive if the right light source is used to accent them. Or, they can be lifeless and dull without proper lighting.

It's actually cheaper to decorate with light than in any other way. Light can make old things look brighter and newer. It can call attention to your decorating skills and accent an otherwise modest room.

When you decorate with light and color, orient it to the decor. For a sunny exposure, think in terms of cool colors — cool white

fluorescent lighting, for example. For a room with a north exposure, think of warm colors — warm fluorescent or incandescent lighting.

How much an area is used and for what activities should govern what you do with color and light. Because color and light affect the environment, a room where you spend much of your active, waking time may be decorated quite differently from one where you spend quiet, thoughtful hours.

Color and light can make a room look larger or smaller. You can make a room look larger by lighting certain features, such as a valance, a whole wall or a cornice. By throwing light down a wall, you, in effect, "wash the wall with light." This appears to push the wall back and make the room appear larger.

By positioning your light source on an object or objects, rather than on a whole wall, you can make a space look smaller. But be careful not to have dark corners. You can also make ceilings look higher or lower. Light directed downward makes a ceiling look higher; light directed upward, as from a cove, makes a ceiling appear lower.

Let's Face It — Snacks Are "In"

IF ASKED, "How many meals a day do Americans eat?" you'd probably answer, "Three, of course." But, think a minute. Is that really the answer? More and more the "snack" is becoming a fourth meal, a regular part of our meal pattern — for young and old alike.

The snack habit, like it or not, is one to which most teenagers are firmly addicted, according to Phyllis Olson, associate professor of foods and nutrition. The average teenager's diet, especially that of Iowa girls, tends to fall below needs primarily in iron, vitamin C and calcium. (See "Look What a Good Diet Can Do" in the October 1963 Iowa Farm Science or reprint FS-1058.)

Whether snacks are good for us can't be answered with a "yes" or "no." The answer depends on several things: the time of the snack, how much we eat for a snack, the kind of food we choose and the snack's relation to other meals.

To choose a good snack, plan to get more than just calories. Choose foods that contribute to the total day's food pattern. Don't snack so much or so close to a meal that it ruins your appetite.

If you're trying to *lose* weight, choose a low-calorie snack. Tomato juice and hot or cold bouillon contain only a few calories. Raw vegetables or fruits, a glass of skim milk, or hard-cooked egg usually come in the "100-calories-or-less" class per serving.

If you're trying to *gain* weight, make sure your snacks "count." Don't fill up on water. Try a small glass of milkshake, an eggnog or an ice cream float. Your snacks should contain a lot of calories in as little space as possible.

Teenagers *want* snacks that are glamorous and sophisticated. They *need* foods that are high in protein, vitamins and minerals. If they choose wisely, they can have snacks that are both glamorous and interesting as well as good for them. In line with the "do-it-yourself" trend, teens love to build their own sundaes, super-sandwiches, hot dogs and hamburgers. Set up the "fixin's" and let each make his own.

Planning Your Score for '64

"WHY AREN'T we ever able to have any money left over?" "How much should we set aside for educating our children?" "What can we do? Something unexpected always seems to ruin even our best-made plans." "We tried a budget, but it

didn't work. What should we do now?"

Familiar questions? These are samples of requests we receive from families wanting information and help with family finances. A few of these families are facing serious trouble in making their "out-go" and income balance. Most of them, however, are making their money go 'round — but wish it would go further. They're not satisfied to see their income slip away without having made much progress toward long-range goals. How about you? Perhaps you and your family sometimes feel the same way.

Looking Back — and Ahead!

What do you wish your money would do for you that it isn't doing right now? With the end of the year coming, now is a good time to think about this. You and your family have time, before the new year begins, to look over your financial picture for the current year.

How has this year turned out differently than you'd anticipated? Where have you made less progress than you'd hoped for? How did you improve over last year? Could you have side-stepped some of the problems you've had to face if you'd planned a little bit better? What are your aims for doing better in '64?

What's Behind What You Want? Some basic causes probably lie back of the specific ways you'd like to do better next year. We try to discover what's behind the questions asked by the families who write us. Often, it's a combination of:

WISHING for an unlimited number of things while faced with limited resources.

WANTING to have many things both now and in the future — without really sifting and sorting through to find out which are wanted most or should be given up first.

WONDERING how other families with about the same income seem to make it go further.

WORRYING about being able to meet large once-a-year commitments, unplanned expenses and approaching high-expenditure items such as college.

"WARRING" and disagreeing with other family members. Financial problems cause tempers to flare and tears to flow.

It's true that money matters can and do create many such disturbances. Your objectives may be to eliminate some of the unnecessary wanting, worrying and warring.

Help to Get You Started: Wanting to improve and sighting some targets don't spell automatic success. You need some guides to follow. Family financial advice is a popular subject for newspaper columns, magazine articles, special-offer pamphlets and paperbacks. You've probably seen many such items with many different slants. You may want to know how to choose and realistically evaluate these sources. To "size up" a source, answer these questions:

Is the information up to date? Beware of "horse and buggy" remedies with spending and saving advice that doesn't apply to today's levels of finance.

Is it a budget? There are many budget-making gimmicks, including a "budget slide rule." Such gimmicks can be used as tools to compare your own plans. But there's no such thing as a specific "average family," and the mold may not fit.

Does it contain more than "dollar-saver" ideas or "buying guides"? A bargain for your neighbor may not be one for you. Use suggestions as alternatives to consider, but also consider other possibilities adaptable to *your* situation. Costs other than money may be involved, too.

Do the suggestions apply to your situation? Most farm families need a different pattern of planning and spending from that of urban families. One big difference is that farm families usually use the same bank account for farm business and family living.

Are regional differences considered? Housing costs more in Boston than in Birmingham. Many spending lists don't take into account the differences in living costs in different parts of the country. Personal preferences and style of living also make for variation.

How about rules? There are no hard and fast rules in realistic money management. No two families are identical. If you find specific "rules," review your own goals and needs before applying the rules.

Are there credit clues? Using credit is one of the most talked about and written about aspects of family finance. Some writers advocate credit use as *the* answer to money problems. Others condemn credit use and suggest avoiding debt entirely. Realistic references will treat con-

sumer credit as a useful tool if managed well — and a potential trap if poorly used.

The right start is what's important. One of the newest references that meets the tests just listed is "Helping Families Manage Their Finances" — an aid just published by the USDA. Its 62 pages give the how's and why's of making and using your own spending plan, how other families use their incomes and how they feel about credit and manage their savings. Costs of credit and earnings from various forms of savings are shown. (Copies of this publication are available at cost, 40 cents, from the Superintendent of Documents, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C.)

Keeping track: Once started, you'll probably find some kind of records helpful in checking your management plan and in seeing what changes or shifts would buy greater satisfactions for you and your family. This way you can see what you actually spend and may plan for improvements in spending. There are many kinds of account books available. It's a good idea to compare and try different ones until you find the system that's best for your needs.

"Your Family Finances," developed by extension specialists in Minnesota and Iowa, is available from your county extension office. In addition to being easy to follow, this account includes a special household inventory and net worth form for you to measure your progress over several years.

Browse in your bookstore, stationery store or dime store for other types of account-keeping systems. Your local bank might have some aids. One of the newer account books is based around the income tax form.

These guides, we hope, have opened some new channels to help you "help yourself" to more satisfactions and fewer dissatisfactions in your money matters for 1964.

If you would like more help with a specific problem or a more complete list of references write: Mrs. Marcena VerPloeg, East Hall, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa, 50010.

— Marcena VerPloeg